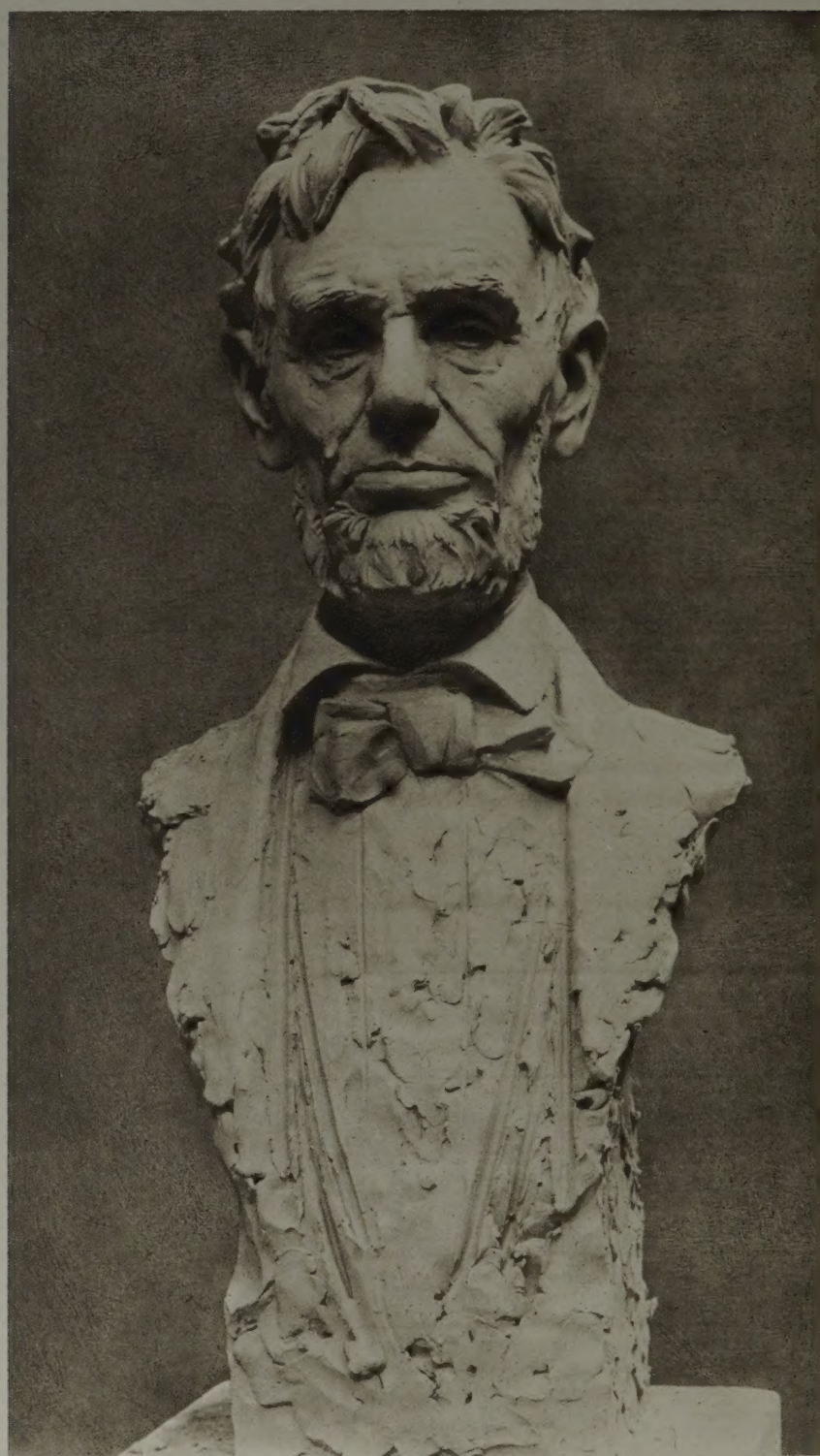


*A New
Pilgrimage*

Volume 136

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*WITH malice towards none;
with charity for all; with firm-
ness in the right, as God gives
us to see the right, let us strive on
to finish the work we are in; to
bind up the nation's wounds;
to care for him who shall have
borne the battle and for his
widow and his orphan, to do all
which may achieve and cherish a
just and lasting peace amongst
ourselves and with all nations.*

*The final paragraph of Abraham.
Lincoln's second inaugural speech,
March 4th, 1865.*

AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE

ONLY a few steps from the Strand, and nearer still to the River Thames, there is a Shrine whose peacefulness has not yet been destroyed by guide-books, though the flowers and wreaths that often lie there speak of a pilgrim's journey. And this Shrine is the Shrine of the Savoy.

Much has already been written about this corner of London; but this little book may interest those who have yet to visit it, and help them on their way.



A NEW PILGRIMAGE

AT the beginning of the present century the new Palace of the Savoy was built to carry on the tradition of the old Savoy Palace built by Peter, Earl of Savoy and Richmond, in the year 1245. One of the great rooms in this new Palace towering above the Thames Embankment was called the Mirror Room. This room was presently to have a history of its own.

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No one can say exactly how this came about, for history grows silently and secretly, and only when the years have

gone are we conscious of their message. But the realization of their importance impelled a few Englishmen to do something that would serve as a lasting record of all the momentous happenings witnessed by this now famous room.

The one outstanding feature of this room, distinguishing it from every other room in London, is that it has been consistently dedicated to the service of America. Imperceptibly it has become a tiny atom of America, perhaps almost a fiftieth state of the Union wedged in between the Strand and the Thames, and almost under the shadow of Westminster Abbey.

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One of the greatest periods in its history was at the beginning of the European war. It was in this room that the American Citizens' Committee established its headquarters and enabled twenty thousand stranded American

tourists to return to their country. Mr. H.C. Hoover and his staff worked day and night on that task, and many an American visitor staying at the Savoy in later years has gone to the Mirror Room to look upon the scene of those tremendous endeavours.

Four months later Mr. Hoover was back in this room directing the original organization of the work of the Belgian Relief Commission, the record of whose activities reads almost like the deeds of the legendary heroes.

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It was in this Mirror Room that the entrance of America into the war was celebrated in London on the 12th of April, 1917. It was on this occasion that the late Dr. Walter Hines Page, the American Ambassador in London, said the words that have so often been repeated: 'If there is an American in this

Room who has not volunteered to give any service that he can, without thought of consequences and without thought of pay, I do not now happen to see him.'

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The most remarkable point in the history of this room is that practically every vital announcement made by British and American statesmen during and after the war, and addressed specifically to the two nations, was made within its four walls.

This was made possible by the wonderful hospitality of the American Luncheon Club and the American Society in London who have for years held their banquets here. It is difficult to count the number of National Festivals and Banquets of Honour and Commemoration which have been celebrated in the Mirror Room.

When Mr. J. W. Davis came to take up his duties at the Court of St. James's as American Ambassador in 1919, this room was the scene of his first public appearance; when Lord Reading returned from the United States after his last mission this room was chosen for his first speech; and when Mr. Lloyd George sailed for America in the autumn of 1923 it was here that he spoke the day before he sailed.

It was in this room that Mr. Winston Churchill, as Minister of Munitions in 1917, made his vivid appeal to a great Anglo-American gathering for 'the supreme intensity of effort' to end the war, and it was here that Earl Grey of Fallodon and Lord Carson made history in their soul-stirring patriotic speeches.

THESE FEW EXAMPLES of the part this room has played in recent Anglo-American history explain how it was that there grew a feeling that something was needed to typify the ideals which the room had fostered, something in keeping with the spirit of the remarkable traditions which had grown up round this room in so short a time.

A desire sprang up to offer some act of appreciation to all those Americans—to the American Luncheon Club and the American Society in London—who had contributed so much to the history and statesmanship of the nations in the actual setting of their wonderful hospitality.

So after much thought it was decided that the most fitting gesture would be the presentation of a bust—a bust of

Abraham Lincoln—to be placed permanently in the room, which should thenceforward be known as the Abraham Lincoln room.

An opportunity for carrying out this act of homage occurred shortly afterwards, on October 29, 1923, when a banquet was given at the Savoy Hotel by the Statesmen of the British Empire and the Representatives of the leading Nations of the World to Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., on his seventy-fifth birthday.

Mr. O'Connor has, during his entire political career, faithfully striven for those ideals of Peace and Liberty so cherished by Abraham Lincoln.

The bust stood on its pedestal in a recess at the end of the room and was unveiled by the Marquess Curzon of

Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Beside him in the Mirror Room, now the Mirror Room only for a few minutes more, stood His Excellency the American Ambassador, Colonel George Harvey and Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P.

The ceremony was witnessed by more than three hundred distinguished guests, amongst whom were the Ambassadors of France, Italy, Spain, Belgium, and Japan, and the ministers of nearly every country represented at the Court of St. James's.

After relating the history of the Mirror Room the Marquess Curzon, in his address, proceeded to the 'dedication of this room to the perpetual memory and name of Abraham Lincoln. Of Abraham Lincoln,' he added, 'it is only

necessary to say that he belonged not to your country alone, Sir [addressing the American Ambassador], nor to the English speaking race alone. He is the property of Humanity.

‘That great man, living within only seventy years of our own life, has set before us an example of native vigour, of supreme intellectual courage, of overmastering patriotism as an example to your race as well as to mine, and the world unites in his honour.

‘This room,’ added Lord Curzon, ‘is to be called in future not the Mirror Room, but the Abraham Lincoln Room. It is a notable fact that on this great occasion in his own life Mr. T. P. O’Connor should have presented this bust, which will for ever stand in this room as a reminder of the historic part this room has played in the past, and will,

I hope, play in the future—a memorial to a supremely great man.'

Thereupon the folds of the Union Jack and of the Stars and Stripes that covered the bust were drawn away.



TO-DAY the Abraham Lincoln Room is distinguished from the other rooms of the Savoy by a plate upon its doors, and all who wish may see the simple shrine it holds.

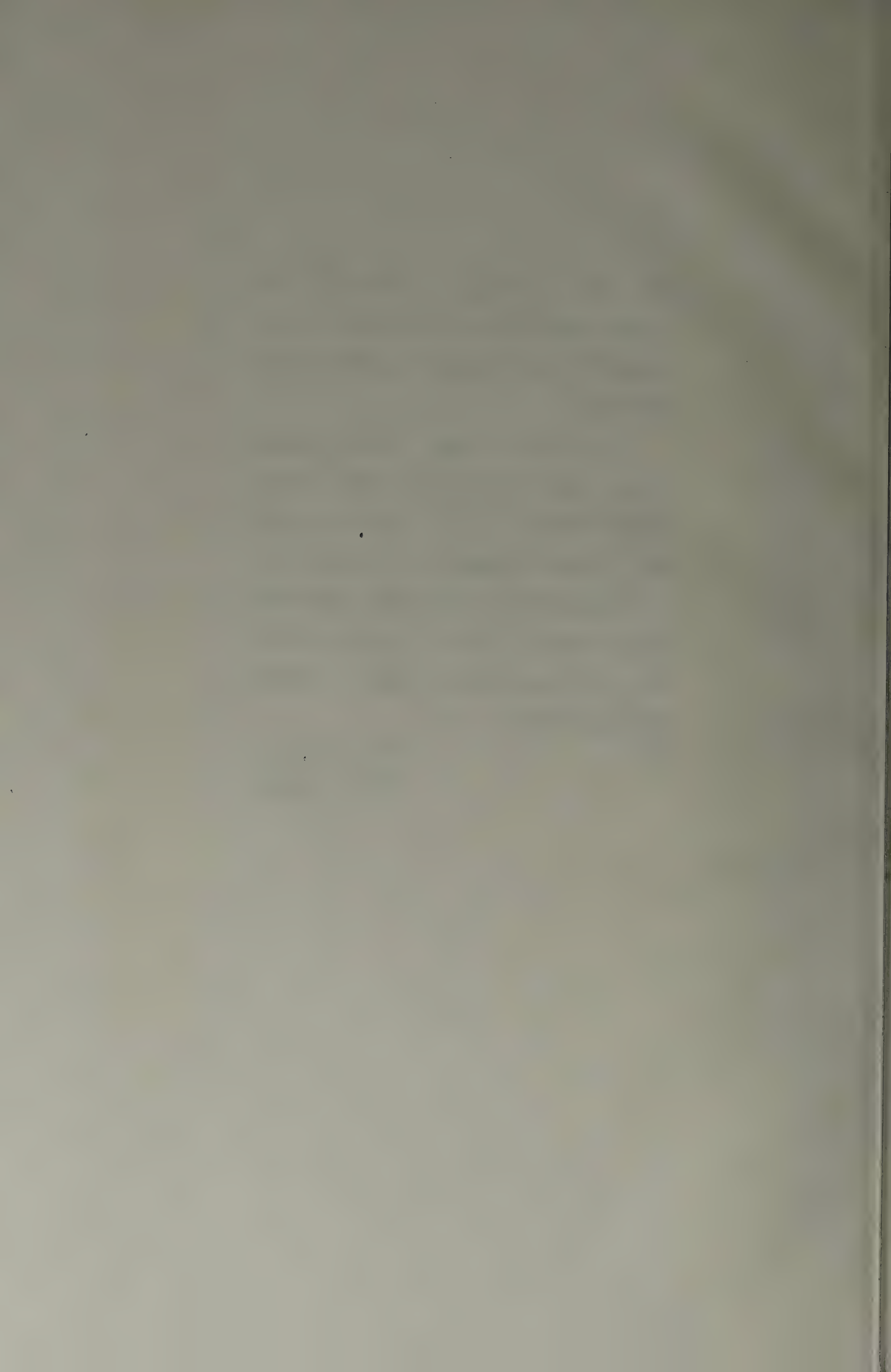
Perhaps this little book may serve to urge Americans who may be in London to remember this corner of America, and to pause a moment before the Shrine of the Savoy.

IN A LARGE SENSE *we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow this ground.*

The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract.

The world will little note nor long remark what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.

*Extract from — —
Abraham Lincoln's
Gettysburg Address*



*Printed at the
Curwen Press*

